

The Paraphrase of de. Erasmus of Roterodame vpon the third Epistle of Iohn.

The text.

The elder vnto the beloued Bayus, whom I loue in the trueth. Beloued I wyshe in all thinges, that thou prosperedst, and fatedst well, euen as thy soule prospereth. For I reioysed greatly, when the brethren came, and testified of the trueth that is in the, how thou walkest in the trueth: I haue no greater ioye, then for to heare howe that my sonnes walke in verytye. Beloued, thou doest faithfully, whatsoeuer thou doest to the brethren, and to straungers, which beare witnes of thy loue before the congregacion. Whiche brethren if thou brynge forwardes of theyr iourney (after a godly sorte) thou shalt do well, because that for hys names sake they went forth: and toke nothinge of the Gentylys. We therefore ought to receaue such, that we myght be helpers to the trueth. I wrote vnto the congregacyon: but Diotrephes, whiche loueth to haue the preemynence among them, receyueth vs not. Wherefore if I come, I will declare hys dedes whiche he doeth, iestyng on vs with malycious wordes, nether is therewith content. Not onely he himselfe receiueth not the brethren, but also he forbiddeth them that woulde, and thrusteth them oute of the congregacion. Beloued, folowe not that whiche is euyl, but that which is good. He that doeth well, is of god: but he that doth euyl, seeth not god. Demetrius hath good reporte of all men, and of the trueth it selfe, yea, and we oure selues also beare recorde, and ye know, that oure recorde is true. I had many thynges to wryte: but I will not with ynke and penne wryte vnto the. I trust I shall shortly se the, and we shall speake mouthe to mouth. Peace be vnto the. The louers salute the. Grete the louers by name.

THe elder vnto the very louynge manne Gaius, whome I loue syncerely. Dearly beloued, this doo I wishe for in my prayers of Iesu Christ, that like as thy soule doleth prosperously well in continuyng stedfastly in the Gospelles doctrine, euen so it may also doe prosperously in al other matters, Christ being thy good spede. For I haue conceaued no small pleasure of the saying of the brethren, whiche are come vnto vs, and haue made re|porte of thy synceritie, they beinge as true witnesse bearours, as thou truly folowest the trueth of the Gospell, not onely in profession, but also in thy studies, & in all thy whole life. For there is no matter that maketh my harte more glad, than if I chaunce to heare, that my childrē, which I begat by the Gospell vnto Christ, doe folow the trueth that we delyuered them. Dearly beloued, in that thou art diligently good vnto the Christians, whiche are there, and come thider as straungers, thou dooest a dede worthy hym that truly putteth his trust in the Gospell, and loueth Christ. For they haue made reporte of thy synceritie before all the whole companye of the Christians. And thou shouldest doe well to, if thou wouldest bring those, whome thou receiuedest gently at their cōming, forth with like gentilnes, thither as they would goe: like as they, which goe about Gods busines & not theyr owne, deserue to be entreated of thē that loue God hartily. For thei went not forth to a market to encrease theyr owne household pelfe, but to preach the name of the

lord Iesu Christ, whose doctrine they distribute so vnto y^e heathens, that they take nothinge of them for all that: to thintente they maye bringe the more frute vnto Christe, for whome they labour: and if they so doe, god defende them from all suspicion of hastinge hande making. In dede it is belsemyng for vs to receyue suche in to oure house, and to prouyde, that they

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want nothinge to the necessitie of theyr lyfe, that we may on some behalfe be partakers of those thinges, which are done by them vnto the glorye of God. For so Christ hathe promised, that he which receiueth a prophete as a prophet, shoulde haue the rewarde of a prophet. I haue written hertofore already vnto the congregation, that is there, to doe the same, that I warne the of: howbeit Diotrophes withstandeth and doeth not receyue our monitions, hauing rather to be a ring leader among his own, than of low degre, and a pure disciple of Christ: and hauing rather to be autour of a new heresy, than to be a true folower of the olde enangelicall doctrine. Wherefore if I come vnto you, I will warne hym of hys doinges, wherof he thinketh peraduenture that I am not ware, while he being a naughtie manne chatreth with malicious wordes againste vs, to thintent he myght take away our credence and autoritie from vs among you, whiche do exhorte you to continue still in the doctrine of the Gospell. Nether beinge herewith content, he doeth not onely not receyue the brethren, but also forbiddeth them that woulde receyue them, and disturheth them in the congregacion. The mans frowardnes is suche. My good louinge brother, folowe not that whiche is euill, but that which is good. It is our parte to suffre them that naught are, but not to folow theyr example. All are not the children of god, which haue receyued baptisme. He that declareth his faith by godlye dedes, is berne of God, for he resembleth the disposicion and doctrine of hys father. He that doeth wickedlye, although he professe God in his wordes, yet he doeth not (for all that) see god truly: for he is sene with moste purely scowred eyes of faith, which are clouded with the darkenes of vices. Therefore auoyde the example of Diotrophes, & set Demetrius before thy eyes to do after. For his godlynes is reported of all men, whiche although they would saye nothing, yet the thinge it selfe maketh reporte of the mannes vertue. Yea and we our selues hauinge experience of hys synceritie, beare witnesse of hym. And you know, that we beare true witnesse of hym. I had also very many other thinges, whiche I was desyrous that thou shouldest knowe, but I thought it not expedient, to put them in wryting. I trust I shall come vnto the shortly: than we shall presently commune of all thinges more surely and more fully. Peace be vnto the. Thy frendes that are here commende them vnto the. And salute thou those frendes agayne, that are there, in theyr behalfe dilygently, and by name.

Thus endeth the third epistle of Iohn.